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THE ORIGINS OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM OF SOUTHERN RHODESIA*

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IN APRIL 1899 Rhodes gave advice to W. H. Milton on the formulation of the first Rhodesian Education Ordinance and predicted rightly, that what was decided on then would 'practically be the educational system of the country in the future'; the genesis of this Ordinance (No. 18 of 1899) therefore deserves attention, particularly as the only published account is brief and ignores relevant data.¹ Furthermore, the system that was created was unique because of local factors, although, of course, contemporary ideas on education, particularly from England and the Cape were of some influence. Also, this system in its main features has endured down to the present day, and Rhodes's prophecy therefore proved remarkably accurate.

By this ordinance, a disproportionate emphasis was laid upon the development of education for Europeans compared with that for other races, a segregated system of schools for the various races in Southern Rhodesia was established, initiative for the provision of schools for Africans was left exclusively in the hands of Christian missionaries, and the type of education to be given to African children was defined differently from that given in European schools. Since then these differences in official attitudes towards education in the different sectors have considerably diminished as far as standards and expenditure are concerned, and the Government has increasingly taken the initiative in the direction and in the provision of non-European education; nevertheless, the state school system is still racially segregated and the Christian missionaries are still responsible, albeit with considerable government financial aid, for the provision of educational facilities for most African school children.²

These divergent trends, however, were apparent before the Education Ordinance of 1899 formalised them, and the explanation of this fact lies in the development of missionary activities amongst Africans in the years before and soon after the arrival of the Pioneer Column. These activities are too

* This article is based on a lecture delivered to the Central Africa Historical Association Conference held in August 1972. I am grateful to Professor R. S. Roberts for his encouragement in rewriting it for publication.

¹LO 1/1 [London Office: Board of Directors, Papers: Agenda with Annexures] 9 [24.iii.-26.iv.1899], J. F. Jones, secretary to the London Board, to Milton, quoting a memorandum by Rhodes for Milton, 15.iv.1899. An extract from this message has been printed as part of a brief description of this ordinance in N. D. Atkinson, *Teaching Rhodesians*, London, Longman, 1972, pp.39-43.

and an analysis of government policy, the best short account is still R. C. Bone, 'Education: For a comparison between government and voluntary expenditure on African educational development in Rhodesia', *The Rhodesian Journal of Economics*, 1968, 2, iv, 5-27.

well-known to bear detailed repetition; and as the Ordinance was primarily concerned with European schools, all that is required here is to show the relationship of missionary activity to the Ordinance.

In the first place, the right of missionaries, some of whom had been at work in the country long before the advent of Company rule, to provide for Africans was never, until recently,³ seriously challenged by the government. Secondly, Rhodes, as well as other Company officials, both in Southern Africa and England, actively promoted missionary educational endeavours in the country; they contacted missionary bodies in England and persuaded them to come and work in Southern Rhodesia where their efforts were encouraged mainly by means of land grants and helpful legislation.⁴ By the turn of the century no fewer than ten missionary denominations were already at work.⁵

The reasons behind Company encouragement of the missionaries, irrespective of denomination, varied, but the encouragement was not solely on account of the fact that the Company would itself have been hard pressed to find sufficient funds for the promotion of African education; for indeed, there is no evidence that the Company ever entertained any such plans for Africans until well after the end of the First World War⁶. Furthermore, Rhodes, who as Premier of the Cape had been much concerned with educational matters, believed that education without evangelism was worthless, and this belief in 1899 played no small part in the formulation of regulations for European education as well as African.⁷

For their own part, the missionaries had for long known that evangelism without a simultaneous provision of formal education was ineffective.⁸ As far as the type of education to be given in the early days was concerned, the missionaries and the Company were in accord. Both felt that the provision of purely literary education was premature. That there was a difference, however, in their motives for preferring industrial to literary education is

³For a Catholic view on recent government policy on reducing Christian missionary activities in African education, see R. H. Randolph, *Church and State in Rhodesia, 1969-1971*, Gwelo, Mambo Press, 1971, ch.6.

⁴For example of how missionaries were encouraged and aided with grants of land, see J. G. McDonald, *Rhodes. A Heritage*, London, Chatto & Windus, 1943, ch.3. For an example of helpful legislation, see the amendment to Cape law relating to the apprenticeship of African children, LO 3/1 [London Office: Out Letters: Administrative and Commercial], 77 [25.iii.-22.iv.1899], J. F. Jones to J. Chamberlain, Secretary of State, 8.ii.1899, and the resulting Apprenticeship (Native Children) Ordinance, No. 1 of 1899.

⁵British South Africa Company, *Reports on the Administration of Rhodesia, 1898-1900*, London [1901], p.335.

⁶For an account of the first government attempt to supplement the work of missions in Rhodesia, at Domboshawa in 1920, see A. V. Murray, *The School in the Bush*, London, Longmans, 1938, pp.111-14.

⁷For Rhodes's ideas on education generally, see McDonald, *Rhodes*, ch.8. For his ideas on the Education Ordinance of 1899, see LO 1/1/9, Jones to Milton, 15.iv.1899; in this document, incidentally, Rhodes made no mention of African, Coloured or Asian education.

⁸For a study of early missionary education policy and history, see R.C. Bone, *African Education: The Period to 1927*, Salisbury, Univ. College of Rhodesia, 1970, Faculty of Education Occasional Paper No. 9.

noticeable in the conditions for grants laid down in the 1899 Ordinance and subsequent amendments to it.⁹ The Company never pressed for a great deal of sophistication in the quality of industrial skills to be imparted by the missionaries, neither did it do so in relation to the literary education that they gave. From the requirements laid down by the Administration in its various Ordinances on 'Native Schools', it would seem that the training of competent labourers for white enterprise was all that was sought.¹⁰ Certain missionaries, on the other hand, appear to have wanted from the start to produce self-sufficient artisans who would play individual roles in society.¹¹ As it happened, few of the missionaries were wealthy enough to provide facilities for giving Africans a very sophisticated education, and their poor response to the 1899 Ordinance prompted the Administration to make even less stringent demands in subsequent legislation.

Events in the years following the Pioneer period indicate that the Company aimed to control and direct African education at minimal expense and it also aimed to encourage its growth as far as the missionaries were able to effect this. By their activities the missionaries were, of course, undertaking the burden of the Company's civilising obligation as laid down in the Royal Charter. Had the missionaries not come to the country in such large variety and numbers during these early years, the Administration might itself have had to undertake responsibility in the field of African education much earlier than it did; and this might have avoided the problems of conflicting educational practices in African education. As it was, the provision of African education in Rhodesia for a long time varied greatly in level, nature and quality, mainly in accordance with the number of different missions at work in the field, and similarly the location and distribution of schools depended on the degree of co-operation or competition between these missionaries.¹²

As far as the missionaries' approach to education itself is concerned, many were rigidly prejudiced against paganism and so tended to transgress the dictum that 'education must be a process of evolution based on African modes

⁹For a study of the origin and development of industrial training in the nineteenth century, see A. E. du Toit, *The Earliest British Document on Education for the Coloured Races*, Pretoria, Univ. of South Africa, 1962, Communication No. C34; for later developments, see K. J. King, *Pan-Africanism and Education*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1971.

¹⁰See Ordinance No. 18 of 1899, Order "B", 'Native Schools'; see also the Education Ordinance No. 1 of 1903, Order "D", 'Schools for Natives', and amendments such as Govt. Notice 133 of 9.iv.1910.

¹¹I. Clinton, *Hope Fountain Story*, Gwelo. Mambo Press, 1969, p.43; and British South Africa Company, *Reports on the Administration of Rhodesia, 1900-1902*, London [1902], p.344.

¹²Such a situation thus failed to meet the desideratum that, 'Education can best be served if it is part of a broadly considered plan of development', J. McHarg, 'Influences Contributing to the Education and Culture of the Native People in Southern Rhodesia, from 1900 to 1961', Duke University, D.Ed. thesis, 1962. p.5. For an illuminating examination of the consequences of this lack of policy, see B. Grimston, *Survey of Native Educational Development, Southern Rhodesia, 1937*, St. Albans, privately, 1942; Atkinson, *Teaching Rhodesians* ch.5, 6, surveys the period but fails to consider in sufficient detail important factors dealt with by Grimston, notably the 'Quota System' of government grants-in-aid, and the full significance of Govt Notice, No. 676 of 1929.

of thought, traditions and environment, and not an attempt to substitute a European mind for an African mind'.¹³ Finally, it might be pointed out that the Company's encouragement of mission schools, and the extent to which such schools existed, saved it from much adverse criticism, particularly after the Risings of 1896-7.¹⁴ This point is important because it suggests a further reason why the 1899 Ordinance contained at least some provision for African education.

While African education, then, was for long treated without any great sense of urgency, except by certain missionary bodies, European education soon became a question of public concern. At first, steps taken to provide schools were piecemeal, because very few children came to the country. The situation, however, changed rapidly after the mid-nineties, particularly in main centres where a number of primary schools quickly sprang up. Perhaps one reason for this early awareness of the importance of education for young Pioneers lay in the quality of the settlers themselves. Bryce, on a visit to Southern Rhodesia, commented on the exceptionally large numbers of well-educated people who came to settle in the country, many of them no doubt influenced by educational developments in England since Forster's Elementary Education Act of 1870.¹⁵

Nevertheless, the Company administration did not officially concern itself with providing and directing the development of even European education until nearly a decade had gone by, mainly because it was preoccupied with military, administrative and political problems that were pressing. Consequently, the establishment of schools was left almost entirely to private individuals or bodies, often acting entirely on their own initiative, but sometimes in response to public demand.¹⁶ The role of the Company was largely in making

¹³Sir Frederick Lugard, 'Progress in Africa', in *The Christian Mission in Africa*, ed. E. W. Smith, London, The International Missionary Council, 1962, p.151. See also, W. R. Peaden, *Missionary Attitudes to Shona Culture*, Salisbury, Central African Historical Association, 1970, Local Series No. 27.

¹⁴For evidence given by various individuals on the conduct of the Company Administration, see *Report by Sir R. E.R. Martin . . . on the Native Administration of the British South Africa Company* [C.8547], pp. 88-125 (H.C. 1897, lxii, 561); failure to utilise this important source distorts the description of the genesis of the Education Ordinance of 1899 given by Atkinson, *Teaching Rhodesians*, pp.39-43.

¹⁵J. Bryce, *Impressions of South Africa*, New York, Century, 1897, p.236, quoted in H. E. D. Hammond, 'The system of education in Southern Rhodesia (1890-1901), its origins and development', in *Board of Education Special Reports on Educational Subjects, Volume 13: Educational Systems of the Chief Crown Colonies . . . Including Reports of the Training of Native Races, Part II: West Africa . . . Seychelles* [Cd. 2378], p.152 (H. C. 1905, xxvi, 1). Such was not the case, however, among all settlers, particularly among the Afrikaner settlers from the Transvaal, and there was sometimes open resistance to education of the young in the rural areas. For accounts of the different educational background, see E. G. Malherbe, *Education in South Africa (1652-1923)*, Cape Town, Juta, 1925; E. Midwinter, *Nineteenth Century Education*, London, Longman, 1970.

¹⁶For four instances when the Administration shared the initiative with local bodies in the establishment of schools, see below under Salisbury, Umtali, Fort Victoria and Melseter: for an example of response to public demand, see [Revd Mother Bertranda] *In God's White-Robed Army. The Chronicle of the Dominican Sisters in Rhodesia 1890-1934*, Cape Town, Maskew Miller, 1950, p.69.

grants of land for schools, the lease of premises, and occasional gifts to schools by senior officials out of their own resources.¹⁷ Such a policy was not inaccurately called 'haphazard',¹⁸ and led in the end to certain modifications of policy in education which were first seriously considered at least three years before the promulgation of the 1899 Ordinance.

The first schools sprang up in the main areas of what seemed likely to be stable and enduring settlement, namely in Salisbury, Bulawayo, Fort Victoria, Umtali, Melsetter, Enkeldoorn and Gwelo. Developments in different centres varied according to the availability of qualified or at least willing teachers, the numbers of children requiring education, the ability and willingness of parents to pay tuition fees and sometimes the extent to which the Administration helped towards the support of the schools.¹⁹

In various centres from time to time, white children were taught at institutions involved mainly in African or Coloured education,²⁰ but separate education for the different races was the general trend even in the early days. As far as the main centres were concerned, this was only natural because the children of the two main races lived largely in different areas; in the rural mission schools, furthermore, the pupils were generally older than is usual in elementary classes, particularly in the early days, and this disparity in ages would have made it difficult to teach African and European children together. Even today, when the age difference has largely disappeared, white Rhodesians often argue that differences in language and background would create problems.

Most of the schools established were for younger children at the primary level. Often one teacher, however, had to cater for pupils of widely different ages. Only Roman Catholic Schools appear to have had teachers in sufficient numbers and suitably qualified to provide facilities for full secondary school courses.²¹

The first school especially for European children was opened in Salisbury by the Dominican Sisters on 18 October 1892, in response to a plea from the public.²² Led by Mother Patrick, the Sisters accepted a handful of pupils for

¹⁷For a good example of this policy in action, see *In God's White-Robed Army*, pp.69-72; incidentally, in 1898 Earl Grey voluntarily subscribed £1,000 towards the American Methodist Mission work for Europeans and Africans at Umtali, British South Africa Company, *Reports on the Administration of Rhodesia, 1897-1898*, London, 1899, p.308.

¹⁸E 5/4/1 (Department of Education: Reports: Miscellaneous: Inspectors' Reports on the Standard of Education and on Educational Facilities . . . , 7.x.1905-13.i.1913), memorandum 'Education in Southern Rhodesia', 21.xi.1906.

¹⁹Hammond, 'The system of education', is the basis for these conclusions. The Risings affected all schools, but particularly in the two main centres, Bulawayo and Salisbury, where the child population was rendered uncertain by these events, *ibid.*, pp.146-9.

²⁰Mount Selinda and Morgenster Missions and St. Cyril's Coloured School, Bulawayo, at different stages of their early history, are good examples of this.

²¹See *The Bulawayo Chronicle*, 28.i. and 15.vii.1899, for prospectuses of St. George's and the Bulawayo Convent, respectively.

²²*In God's White-Robed Army*, p.69.

tuition in a pole-and-dagga hut. The Company provided land, while its officials, notably Rhodes and Jameson, helped with gifts and prizes. Local help led to the erection of a brick building to replace the original hut, and Rhodes himself supplied the tin roof.²³ In 1893 a rival Anglican Church school appeared and the Convent lost some of its pupils as a result.²⁴ A third voluntary school was established in the town in 1895 by the Dutch Reformed Church.²⁵

Between 1895 and 1898 no more schools were established in Salisbury, unlike Bulawayo where a number of schools sprang up at this time. The reason for this was that the church schools were adequate at a time of temporary stagnation in Salisbury due to the loss of population to Bulawayo, the delay in the arrival of the railway and the protracted Shona rising.²⁶ Things were to pick up, however, and in accordance with plans made in 1897, which are more conveniently examined later, the government in 1898 entered into an agreement with the Municipality to establish a public undenominational school, thus beginning a process by which Church schools were to give way to government ones. The Administration and the Municipality shared the expense of establishing the school which began operation on 14 November 1898.²⁷ The Administration and the Municipality both appointed two representatives on the School Management Board and a fifth member of it was elected by the parents of the pupils.²⁸ The Anglican school then closed down in 1898; according to the Bishop this was in order to avoid competition between schools in such a small community, which in fact was unnecessary as the new school provided free access to all denominations for

²³*Ibid.*, pp.69-72.

²⁴M. Gelfand, *Mother Patrick and Her Nursing Sisters*, Wynberg, Juta, 1964, p.159.

²⁵P. A. Strasheim, *In the Land of Cecil Rhodes*, Cape Town, Juta, 1896, p.90. It should be noted that this school received no aid under the terms of the Jameson-Strasheim Agreement (see below, p.63) because the other two church schools in Salisbury received no money grants and also because the Agreement was meant to apply to Dutch Reformed Church schools in outlying areas where large proportions of the white inhabitants were of Afrikaner origins, EC 1/1/1 (Executive Council: Out Letters: General 11.i.1895-14.v.1902), W. R. Fields, Acting Secretary to the Council, to the Revd P.A. Strasheim, 17.xii.1895.

²⁶In 1896 Milton, who had recently arrived in town, lamented on it as 'fearful dull, there being no business there at all, everything being centred in Bulawayo', Hist. Mss Collect., MI1 1 [Papers of William H. Milton: Correspondence and Other Papers], 2 [Personal, 1.x.1884-24.x.1908] Milton to wife, 2.ix.1896.

²⁷*The Rhodesia Herald*, 10.xi.1898.

²⁸LO 1/1/1 [8.vi.-19.vii. 1898], memorandum for London Board of Acting Administrator's proposals on the school, 9.vii.1898. Co-operation between members of the Board were to break down in 1901 in a controversy over the election of a new headmaster, and as a result the Administration took over the school entirely, Hist.Mss Collect., MI1 1/2, Milton to wife, 24.viii.-11.xi.1901, where a number of letters refer to the school controversy; see also E1/1 [Department of Education: Out Letters: General], 2[26.viii. 1901-21.iv.1902], *passim*; E2/11/52/9 (Department of Education: Correspondence: Schools, European, Salisbury: High School: 11.xi.1898-8.iv.1909), *passim*; *The Rhodesia Herald*, 11.v.1901-9.i.1902.

religious instruction.²⁹

In Bulawayo the first school for Europeans appears to have been set up by a Mrs Willis early in 1895, but there is no record of its existence after that date.³⁰ In the same year Dominican Nuns who came to the town specifically to start a school began operations, while Fr A. M. Daignault, S. J. began a school for boys, whom he recruited after seeing them running aimlessly around the streets.³¹ Then came a Dutch Reformed school, opened on 1 October 1895, under the supervision of a Mr Groenewald, which is important in the history of education in Rhodesia; for it arose from an agreement by the Administrator and the Dutch Reformed Church in 1895, known as the Jameson-Strasheim Agreement, whereby, the cost of school buildings and teachers' salaries would be supplemented by the Administration.³²

This was one of only two instances when the government made regular grants, specifically for school purposes, to a church body, and therefore provided a precedent for provisions of this nature in the Education Ordinance of 1899. It was drawn up by Jameson and authorised by Rhodes before W. H. Milton joined the Administration and set about trying to establish the Cape system of government aid solely to secular undenominational schools. Furthermore, it was the only instance in the history of European education in Rhodesia of the state aiding voluntary schools in which English was not the medium of instruction and providing for religious instruction by one denomination only. Another two schools, in addition to the one in Bulawayo, arose from this agreement, in Melsetter and Enkeldoorn, before it was terminated in April 1901.³³

By 1898 four new schools had appeared in Bulawayo. In November 1897 St. John's replaced a smaller Anglican church school which had begun operations in 1896.³⁴ A Hebrew school appeared in 1898 and operated until

²⁹LO 4/1/7 [London Office: Departmental Reports: Annual: 1888-1900], Report of the Bishop of Mashonaland for the year ending 31.iii.1900. Atkinson, *Teaching Rhodesians*, p.26, incorrectly asserts that after 1897 the Anglican Church concentrated its activities in African Mission work and took no further part in European education during this period. In fact the Anglican Church was closely connected with running Plumtree School until 1914 and managed European schools in various centres until 1910.

³⁰O. Ransford, *Bulawayo: Historic Battleground of Rhodesia*, Cape Town, Balkema, 1968, p.140, mentions Mrs Willis's school; The British South Africa Company, *Report on the Company's Proceedings and the Condition of the Territories within the Sphere of its Operations, 1894-1895*, London, 1896, p.69, says that there was only one school in the town, a private undenominational one, but does not name the Principal. Subsequent reports make no mention of a school run by Mrs Willis.

³¹*In God's White Robed Army*, p.155.

³²Strasheim, *In the Land of Cecil Rhodes*, pp.61, 118-19; Atkinson, *Teaching Rhodesians*, does not mention this agreement.

³³E1/1/1 (17.i.1900-24.viii. 1901), H. E. D. Hammond, Inspector of Schools to Chief Secretary, 10.ix.1900.

³⁴LO 1/1/4 [2-23.xi.1898], Bishop of Mashonaland to the Administrator, 21.vii.1898; and British South Africa Company, *Reports on the Administration of Rhodesia, 1897-1898*, p.269. The Church somewhat reluctantly allowed it to give way in 1910 to Milton High, the first purely government school in Bulawayo; E 2/11/6/13 [Department of Education: Correspondence: European Schools: Bulawayo: St. John's, 5.iv.1902-17.v. 1911], Revd H. N. Foster, headmaster of St. John's, to Director of Education, 30.v.1910; and G. Duthie, Director of Education, to St. John's School Council, 16.vi.1910.

1900.³⁵ Sometime between 1897 and 1898 two new private schools opened, one of them under a Mrs Williams and the other under a Miss Austin.³⁶ The first school to provide higher education was the Catholic Boys' Public School established in 1898, which was later renamed St. George's; here a commercial course was offered, and academic classes went up to University entrance level.³⁷ By the turn of the century there also seems to have been a considerable Coloured community in the town, and some Coloured children received education at St Columba's Anglican Mission School, which was primarily for Africans.³⁸

In Umtali Miss Zillah Marion Miles opened the first school in March 1896.³⁹ The second opened in the following year under an agreement between the Administration and the American Methodist Missionaries. This unusual agreement, in which central and local initiative went hand in hand, was occasioned by the removal in 1898 of the town from Old Umtali to a new site nearer the railway line. The site of Old Umtali, complete with buildings and 13,000 acres of land was presented to the American Methodists on condition that they established an industrial mission for Africans there and a school for European children in Umtali itself. The government provided a building and also contributed towards general costs and the salaries of the teachers.⁴⁰ At his time, however, Milton was trying to implement the undenominational schools policy and was tied by an Executive Council Resolution to this effect, so that the American Methodists had also to agree that no religious instruction would be given in their schools save for daily Bible readings. It is not clear why the principle of right of entry, which, as will be seen, was applied to a government-aided school in Fort Victoria at this time, was not also applied in the case of the Umtali school. Perhaps one reason for this was that the Umtali school, unlike the one in Fort Victoria, was run by a religious

³⁵Hammond, 'The system of education', p.159.

³⁶*Reports on the Administration of Rhodesia, 1897-1898*, p.130. Subsequent reports mention only Miss Austin's school, and Mrs. Williams's school therefore could not have lasted very long. It is not clear for how long Miss Austin's school was operative.

³⁷*Ibid.* In 1903, indeed, the school was to produce the first two Rhodes Scholars from Rhodesia. For further details on the early history of St. George's see W. F. Rea, *Seventy-Five Years in Two Cities: The Story of St. George's*, Salisbury, Cannon Press, 1971, pp.11-20. Under the school's famous Principal, Fr Marc Barthelemy, who was himself an ex-soldier, the martial spirit of the age was reflected in the formation by the school in 1898 of the first cadet corps in Rhodesia; see *The Bulawayo Chronicle*, 24.xii.1898.

³⁸LO 4/1/7, Draft of Inspector of Schools Report for the year ending 31.iii.1900. The first school to be opened exclusively for Coloured children was St. Cyril's in 1900, but it had a short life and closed in 1904; it is stated that St Cyril's received over £300 in government aid between 1902 and 1904, E 6/1/1 (Department of Education: Registers: Expenditure and Statistics: School Grants and Attendances, 1900-1904), pp.54-5. The first school for Coloureds that lasted for a number of years was taken over in 1906 by the Revd F. L. Hadfield, the New Zealand Church of Christ Missionary who became a well known political figure, E 2/4/2 (Department of Education: Correspondence: Committees and Conferences: Education Committee, 1908, 30.viii.1907-13.vii.1908). The school was granted £50 in aid on 31.xii.1907.

³⁹J. M. Boggie, *Experiences of Rhodesia's Pioneer Women*, Bulawayo, Philpott and Collins, 1950, p.133.

⁴⁰*A History of Umtali Girls' and Boys' High Schools 1896-1968: The Borderer*, (The Magazine of the Umtali Boys' High School), Jubilee Edition 1969, p.11.

body which might have been sensitive to allowing entry to other denominations. As it happened, it was probably the stricture on religious instruction which prompted the Anglican Revd Arthur Robins to give classes in Umtali early in 1899⁴¹ from which grew St John's School.

Meanwhile, Miss Miles's school in Umtali, unlike any other private school in the country, received government grants in aid of the teacher's salary and school requisites, as well as a building in the new town. It appears that Milton was persuaded to allow this further departure from his policy of establishing undenominational schools only in co-operation with local municipal town management boards as the result of the influence of Sir Alfred Milner, the High Commissioner, who visited Miss Miles in 1897 and promised her that such aid would be forthcoming; as it happened, it became too much for one teacher to manage the class of thirty or so pupils 'of all ages and stages', and the school gave way to the one run by the American Methodists later in 1898.⁴²

In the Melsetter area the first school was established by the Dutch Reformed Church in 1895.⁴³ It closed down before the year ended, though, and then reopened in 1896 with government aid under the Jameson-Strasheim agreement. Very few pupils were attracted to it, however, and the annual enrolment was only five.⁴⁴ From South Melsetter between 1896 and 1902 a handful of European children went to the American Board Mission School at Mount Selinda, upon which a former female pupil reported as follows: 'We had to learn with the native children because there was only one classroom. There was, of course, no inspector, and the teacher, a Miss Gilson, passed us as far as we could go, namely standard four'.⁴⁵ Children who attended this school, had to board as it was a considerable distance away from South Melsetter. In 1899 it is reported that a schoolroom was erected in

⁴¹LO 4/1/7, Report of the Bishop of Mashonaland for the year ending 31.iii.1900. The most famous of his pupils was Kingsley Fairbridge, *A History of Umtali Girls' and Boys' High School*, p.15. He, however, made no reference to these lessons although he does have a reference to Mrs M. Tulloch, who assisted Robins with classes, in connection with some pets that she gave K. Fairbridge, *The Story of Kingsley Fairbridge*, London, Oxford Univ. Press, 1938, pp.15, 20. St. John's rivalled the Umtali Academy, as the Methodist public school liked to be called, until 1909 when they both gave way to a school run entirely by the government, *A History of Umtali Girls' and Boys' High School*, p.21.

⁴²Boggie, *Experiences of Rhodesia's Pioneer Women*, pp.133-4.

⁴³This school may have resulted from an application to the government for the establishment of a school by Dunbar Moodie, EC 3/1/1 [Executive Council: Minute Books: Council Meetings: 10.xi.1894-24.i.1905], fifth meeting, 17.i.1895.

⁴⁴Hammond, 'The system of education', pp.158-64.

⁴⁵C. P. Olivier, *Many Treks Made Rhodesia*. Cape Town H. Timmins, 1957, p.129. See also, British South Africa Company, *Report on the Company's Proceedings and the Condition of the Territories within the Sphere of its Operations, 1896-1897*. London, 1898. p.137; *Reports on the Administration of Rhodesia, 1897-1898*, p.264; *Reports on the Administration of Rhodesia, 1898-1900*, p.337; *Reports on the Administration of Rhodesia, 1900-1902*, p. 352.

Melsetter village and Predikant Le Roux ran a school there on undenominational lines.⁴⁶ By 1900 this school had closed and nearly two years passed before Miss Gilson came from Mount Selinda to open Chimanimani School, which resulted from a special agreement between the government, settlers and the American missionaries.⁴⁷ In 1901 another school appeared, this time in North Melsetter, which closed in 1902 but which is of interest as a precursor of the Farm and Mine Schools established in various parts of the country districts from 1907 onwards.⁴⁸

The Europeans in the Melsetter area were predominantly Afrikaner and as such presented certain peculiar problems as far as educational progress was concerned. In South Melsetter they were generally opposed to the idea of sending their children to schools provided by the Administration, and objected in particular to the fact that English was the sole medium of instruction. The local leader of the community was described in 1902 by the Government Inspector of Schools, who was a somewhat prejudiced Englishman, as 'a rich but more than ever ignorant leader, whose face was set against all improving influences'.⁴⁹ Apart from any prejudice against education, the poverty of farmers in the area retarded progress. After a particularly bad visitation of the rinderpest, parents of boarders at the Chimanimani School could only afford to pay fees in kind and the Government had to step in to save the school from closing down completely by subsidising each pupil.⁵⁰ The fact that many farmers relied on the labour of their children and were loath to lose them to the classroom also militated against the establishment of schools.⁵¹

In Enkeldoorn and Fort Victoria similar problems to those in Melsetter arose. Little is known on schools in Enkeldoorn during the pioneer period apart from the fact that a Dutch Reformed Church school appeared there before 1900, under terms of the Jameson-Strasheim agreement.⁵² More has come to light, however, on Fort Victoria's pioneer schools. In 1892 Fr Marc Barthelemy came to the town where, during his stay of about eighteen months, he gave lessons to the three sons of a Mrs Austin,⁵³ and there also appears to have been an Anglican school for a time before 1894.⁵⁴ A certain Miss

⁴⁶The erection of the building is mentioned in 1899 in *Reports on the Administration of Rhodesia, 1898-1900*, p.337; for further details on this and other European schools in the area from 1895 to 1969, see S. Sinclair, *The Story of Melsetter*, Salisbury, M. O Collins, 1971.

⁴⁷Sinclair, pp.48, 50.

⁴⁸Hammond, 'The system of education', p.159. A Mr Steyn provided the school building on Johannesburg Farm and the government supplied a teacher.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, p.162. His counterpart in North Melsetter, however, appears to have been quite different in outlook; hence the establishment of Johannesburg Farm School.

⁵⁰Southern Rhodesia, *Report of the Education Committee, 1908*, Sessional Papers, 1908, A.5, p.5.

⁵¹Hammond, 'The system of education', p.162.

⁵²*Ibid.*, p.162. This school may have been the result of a request made to the government in June 1895 by Field Cornet H. Ferreira, EC 3/1/1, minutes of twenty-fifth meeting, 4.vii.1895.

⁵³Rea, *Seventy-Five Years in Two Cities*, p.7.

⁵⁴*Cape Times*, 11.iv.1894.

Ceronio, who masqueraded as Mrs Horn, appears to have been next in the educational field, with a school which she ran briefly in 1897.⁵⁵ Towards the end of 1897 negotiations between the Government and local citizens took place for a school which the latter felt should 'afford every facility for the religious instruction of all its pupils by representatives of their several denominations'.⁵⁶ Thus, the right of entry clause (Order "A", section 9 of the Ordinance of 1899) was anticipated by some two years. The new school was opened under a Miss Metcalf in May 1898, only to close down in 1901 on account of the inability of parents to pay fees.⁵⁷

The smaller centres show the same pattern of schools, often founded largely by the efforts of clerics. In Gwelo, the first school was run by a Mr Walsh in 1898,⁵⁸ but closed in December 1900;⁵⁹ meanwhile, also in 1900, a private infant school under the Misses Palgrave appeared, and private tuition also was offered by an Anglican priest, the Revd J. A. Walker.⁶⁰ Plumtree School also comes into this category in a way; for it began in Francistown with twenty pupils, late in 1899 or early in 1900.⁶¹ Soon afterwards it was transferred to the town which has become so closely identified with

⁵⁵DV 1/1/2 (Civil Commissioner and Magistrate, Fort Victoria: In Letters: General: 25.vi.1894-28.xii.1899), Miss Ceronio to the Resident Magistrate, 14.ix.1897; I am grateful to Dr. D. N. Beach for this reference. Her deception in the matter of her name, however, was revealed when she found herself pregnant, whereupon her ostensible husband deserted her. She tried to carry on teaching but could not support herself on the fees she received which were, incidentally, supplemented by money earned from the bakery service which she also gave to the town, *ibid.*, Miss Ceronio to the Resident Magistrate, 15.ix.1897.

⁵⁶Hammond, 'The system of education', p.151.

⁵⁷*Ibid.* A Church of England school then operated until 1902 when it also had to close, *Reports on the Administration of Rhodesia, 1900-1902*, p.357. Some of its former pupils then attended Morgenster Mission where they 'rubbed shoulders' with African youngsters, L. H. Gann, *A History of Southern Rhodesia*, London, Chatto & Windus, 1965, p.207. In 1903 the Anglican public school re-opened, and in 1905 it was finally taken over by the Administration and is the ancestor of the Fort Victoria High School of today, *Report of the Education Committee, 1908*, p.3.

⁵⁸LO 3/1/72 [29.x.-26.xi.1898], A. B. T. Poingestre, Secretary to the Gwelo Town Council, to the Administrator for Mashonaland, 15.ix.1898.

⁵⁹E 2/11/23 [Education Department: Correspondence: European Schools: Gwelo], 1 (Chaplin High School . . . , 1.v.1898-11.ii.1924), Inspector of Schools to Chief Secretary, 27.ii.1901.

⁶⁰LO 4/1/7, Report of the Civil Commissioner, Gwelo, P. G. Smith, for the year ending 31.iii.1900. Walker and the Anglican Bishop also supported the Revd R. Truscott of the Congregational Church in starting the Trinity Church School, E 2/11/23/1, Truscott to McIlwaine, 27.vi.1901. In 1901 this school was to be aided by the Administration, *ibid.*, Chief Secretary to Inspector of Schools, 20.viii.1901. In 1903 it was absorbed into a public undenominational school which was opened in co-operation with a local management committee, *ibid.*, Duthie to Truscott, 15.ix.1903; one of the Misses Palgrave taught in this school, as did Truscott, but the headmaster was now a Mr Watkins, *ibid.*, Truscott to Duthie, 20.vi.1903. In 1908 the school finally came entirely under government control, *Report of the Education Committee, 1908*, p.10. Meanwhile a Convent school had been operating since 1903, E 2/11/23/2 (Convent, 31.v.1901-8.ii.1926), Inspector of Schools to Chief Secretary, 17.vi.1903.

⁶¹LO 4/1/7, Report of the Bishop of Mashonaland for the year ending 31.iii.1900, states that the school, with twenty pupils, was by then operating in Francistown; the school's first Principal said that in July, 1899, the Anglican Church Railway Mission was 'in two minds' about whether to establish the proposed school in Francistown or Plumtree, E. Lloyd, 'Early days of the School', *The Plumtree School Magazine*, 1919, 13, 4.

the school because a railway official there had nine children in need of education.⁶²

Four points should be noted in conclusion to this brief sketch of schools that appeared in the pioneer period. Firstly, against this background of largely independent and diverse activity in education, any legislation on the subject would have to take heed of what had been done. Secondly, it had been convenient for the Company to assist and allow church and private bodies to take the initiative in starting schools when settlement was tentative. Later, when permanent settlement seemed assured and local bodies proved to be unwilling or unable to run schools, even with state assistance, the Administration took over many European schools entirely. Thirdly, the Company stalled on committing itself to too much expenditure on public amenities such as schools, even when permanent settlement seemed assured, because after the Risings its own tenure of government was in doubt. Finally, during the pioneer decade many children, particularly in rural areas, went without any formal education, or at best enjoyed very sporadic primary school careers.⁶³

The delay in the formulation of an official educational policy until 1899 is comprehensible in the circumstances: the first priority had to be the establishment of the very structure of the state — the definition of frontiers, assertion of political and administrative control and the development of communications; and the huge expense⁶⁴ of these meant that education came low on the list particularly as the number of children was small in the early years. The growth of the European child population from 1897⁶⁵ and the constitutional settlement of 1898 which ended doubts about the Company's tenure of power, however, made the Administration take more notice of the educational question, which had caused public dissatisfaction.

During the British Parliamentary Enquiry by Sir Richard Martin in 1896-7 various individuals, particularly clergymen, were called upon to give evidence and they evinced a general desire for greater help from the Administration in education. Yet although the Administration was criticised it was by no means condemned, and it gained some credit for what had already been done for schools in the country. An immediate divergence of opinion manifested

⁶²Lloyd, 4. The Anglican Church built and ran the school, with aid from the Administration and the Railway, and with the help of a loan from R. A. Fletcher, M.L.C. in 1911, Southern Rhodesia, *Debates in the Legislative Council, Fifth Session of the Fifth Council, 8th to 19th May 1911*, Salisbury [1911], p.34; despite Fletcher's help, the school finally passed entirely into the hands of the Administration three years later, *Debates, 28th April to 8th May, 1915*, c.275.

⁶³Hammond, 'The system of education', p.161, estimated that only about 40 per cent of the European children of school age in the country attended officially recognised schools in 1901.

⁶⁴LO 3/1/64 (2-23.iv.1898), Administrator's Report, 'Affairs in Rhodesia', No. 235 of 2 iv.1898.

⁶⁵*Report on the Administration of Rhodesia, 1897-1898*, Report of the Civil Commissioner, Bulawayo, E. Ross-Townsend, for the year ended 31.iii.1898, p.269.

itself when suggestions were made as to what could be done to improve education in the country. A Wesleyan Church Minister, at one extreme, favoured the establishment of a purely undenominational system of government aided public schools, while at the other extreme, a Roman Catholic priest advocated a system of predominantly private or voluntary schools which would receive grants-in-aid from the government. Closely connected with this controversy was opposition voiced by witnesses against the conformity of Southern Rhodesia's Administration with that in the Cape.⁶⁶ Although education was not directly mentioned in this opposition, the great fear of the two main Church bodies, the Roman Catholics and the Anglicans, was that the Cape undenominational system would be adopted in Southern Rhodesia; and this dominated all subsequent relations between them and the Government until these fears were laid to rest temporarily by the Ordinance of 1899.

The controversy can be said to have originated in Rhodes's appointment of Milton to senior office in the country's administration. Rhodes instructed Milton in 1896 to assimilate the administration 'in every detail' to the Cape system.⁶⁷ Apparently, in accordance with this plan, which Rhodes intended to facilitate the union of Southern Rhodesia with the South African states, a resolution was passed in the Executive Council in 1897 'providing for building and maintenance grants in the case of Undenominational Public Schools'.⁶⁸

The first step taken to promote actively the undenominational policy in Southern Rhodesia came in February 1897, when the Executive Council decided specially to revise regulations providing for the establishment of Municipalities, which it had passed in the previous month, in order to enable those bodies to establish public schools.⁶⁹ By July 1897, this regulation was promulgated,⁷⁰ and was to form the basis of negotiations between the Administration and Salisbury Municipality in 1898 for the establishment of the public undenominational school, that has already been described. In October 1897, Milton, who had succeeded Early Grey as Senior Administrator in July, suggested in a confidential letter to him that the London Board lay money aside for giving aid to undenominational schools, and on 17 November 1897 the London Board decided to do so to the extent of £15,000.⁷¹ The

⁶⁶*Report on the Native Administration of the British South Africa Company, passim.*

⁶⁷Hist.Mss Collect., MI1 1/1 (Official, c.1896-8.v.1930), Rhodes to Milton, 13.vii.1896.

⁶⁸LO 1/1/4, P. Inskipp, Undersecretary, B.S.A. Co., to Bishop Gaul of Mashonaland, 14.x.1898, where it is stated: 'That as the result of discussion with Lord Grey before he left Salisbury [in June 1897] the Council passed a resolution providing for building and maintenance grants in the case of Undenominational Public Schools, and the Board of Directors placed a certain sum of money at the disposal of the Government for this purpose'. No evidence has come to light of a so-called 'Milton Resolution' of 1899 which figures prominently in the account given of the genesis of the Education Ordinance of 1899 in Atkinson, *Teaching Rhodesians*, pp.39-42.

⁶⁹EC 3/1/1, forty-sixth meeting, 3.ii.1897, Minute No. 30.

⁷⁰British South Africa Company, *Government Gazette*, 7.vii.1897, Notice 145, 'Regulations Providing for the Constitution of Municipalities', section 108, sub-section 31.

⁷¹LO 1/1/8 [1-22.iii.1899]. Extracts from Board Meeting held on 17.xii.1897, in Agenda for Board Meeting, 1.iii.1899.

first school to benefit from this decision was the one in Fort Victoria, which although it was guaranteed government aid late in 1897, did not open until May 1898.⁷²

From these events it would appear that Milton by the end of 1897 had decided to adopt the Cape education policy of grants-in-aid solely to undenominational schools. Events in 1898, however, made it difficult for him to prevent the further establishment of voluntary schools and deny them government aid. Early in the year the Dominicans and Jesuits applied to the Government for grants of land in Gwelo for the purpose of establishing schools there. In the case of the Jesuits this application was successful, but only because it was 'in fulfilment of a promise'.⁷³ When and by whom this promise had been made to the Jesuits, it is not clear. No such promise had been made to the Dominican Sisters, however, and so their application was turned down 'in view of the proposed vote towards establishing undenominational schools'.⁷⁴

The use of the word 'proposed' here suggests that although the London Board had decided to lay aside money for undenominational public schools, and although a resolution on an undenominational schools policy had been made in the Executive Council during the previous year, nothing had as yet been finalised by the Company. No doubt Milton contacted Rhodes for advice in connection with these Roman Catholic applications on 8 February 1898. Consequently Rhodes telegraphed the following message to Milton:

I should not do anything about education until your new council sits. I should then submit a scheme for education as you desire it, namely on the basis of [the] Cape Colonial System but with this amendment on the English basis, namely a grant per head to voluntary schools with a certain assistance for buildings. I must say that experience teaches us the world prefers religion in its instruction to the young.⁷⁵

Meanwhile the activities of the Dominican Nuns continued to complicate matters. Their application for land in Gwelo was eventually granted for a school at the end of May 1898. By then, however, another problem had arisen for in November 1897, they had begun to build a new Convent School in Bulawayo, and by May 1898 found themselves in urgent need of a £2,000 loan from the Administration. In the application for this loan, made on their behalf by Fr Daignault, a full account was given of the extensive medical and educational work done by Catholics in Southern Rhodesia which, to-

⁷²For details on the grant of aid, see EC 3/1/1, fifty-third meeting, 16.xi.1897, Minute No. 167; see also above p.67.

⁷³EC 3/1/1, fifty-sixth meeting, 8.ii.1898, Minute No. 215.

⁷⁴Ibid., Minute No. 220.

⁷⁵Hist.Mss Collect., M11 1/1, Rhodes to Milton, 9.ii.1898. This telegram is quoted in Atkinson, *Teaching Rhodesians*, p.41.

gether with a testimony made by Col. Frank Rhodes in praise of their mission at Chishawasha, he hoped would justify the loan.⁷⁶ This loan was granted in June 1898 and in April the following year it was converted into a gift.⁷⁷

Despite these departures from the Cape system, it appears that Milton was determined to promote the public undenominational system. Accordingly, in July 1898, in consultation with the Salisbury Municipality he drew up the scheme for the public school there,⁷⁸ and the trustees were granted land for building purposes in the same month.⁷⁹ This action appears to have alarmed the Catholics, for Father Sykes, Superior of the Jesuit Fathers in Rhodesia, immediately penned an impassioned plea to the London Board on behalf of giving aid to voluntary schools, in which he roundly condemned the Cape system. The arguments used in this letter are worth repeating, not only because they reveal defects in the Cape system, but also because they probably reinforced Rhodes in his determination to have Milton's purely Cape Scheme of 1897 modified. Sykes quoted Dr Muir, the Superintendent General of Schools in the Cape, who criticised government-aided undenominational schools in the colony as being undenominational 'only by name [for they soon become] the school of the denomination to which the members of the [School] Board belong. Sometimes it is the denomination prevailing in the District, sometimes it is not even that.' In Fr Sykes's opinion, the quality of education in these schools was often inferior. If they were granted a monopoly of government aid that led to the closure of voluntary schools, he felt that standards would fall as a result of an absence of competition. Fr Sykes wound up his case by pointing out the injustice of taxing people for the support of the schools which were unsuitable for the education of their children, and the ingratitude involved should the Company suddenly cut off aid to voluntary Church Schools.⁸⁰

Soon after Sykes had sent this letter, the Company granted land to the American Methodists in Umtali for school purposes, and in September it did the same for the Anglican Church in Bulawayo.⁸¹ In August Bishop Gaul applied to the Company for a grant to this school on the 'pound for pound' principle, claiming that Earl Grey, before his departure from Southern Rhodesia, had made a verbal promise to him that such a grant would forthcoming.⁸² Despite this, the Bishop's application was turned down, even

⁷⁶LO 3/1/66 [18-28.v.1898]. Daignault to the London Board, 16.v.1898.

⁷⁷LO 3/1/77 [25.iii-22.iv.1899], J. F. Jones, Secretary to the London Board, to Milton, 8.iv.1899.

⁷⁸LO 1/1/1, memorandum for the London Board on Acting Administrator's proposals on the school, 9.vii.1898.

⁷⁹EC 3/1/1, sixty-first meeting, 5.vii.1898, Minute No. 298.

⁸⁰LO 3/1/68 (16-30.vii.1898), Sykes to the London Board, forwarded by Father A. M. Daignault, S.J., 22.vii.1898.

⁸¹EC 3/1/1, sixty-second meeting, 28.vii.1898, Minute No. 306; sixty-fourth meeting, 14.ix.1898, Minute No. 327. This grant to the Anglicans was in addition to one made in the previous year when they evinced a desire to use some of it for the purpose of erecting a 'Grammar School', *ibid.*, forty-ninth meeting, 14.vi.1897, Minute No. 68.

⁸²LO 1/1/4, Gaul to Milton, 21.viii.1898.

though the London Board had urged Milton to treat the application favourably if it was not 'contrary to his policy on the matter of education'.⁸³ Gaul was informed that the only money available from the Company for education was for undenominational schools, but that the 'whole question of education' would be considered by the new Legislative Council which was due to meet early in the following year.⁸⁴ Earl Grey's conscience appears to have suffered somewhat on account of his having made a promise which could not be kept, for a month after Gaul's application was turned down, Milton was instructed to give the Bishop £50 on Grey's behalf.⁸⁵

By the end of 1898 it would appear that Milton was faced with a problem which was becoming increasingly difficult to handle. In 1896 he had been told by Rhodes to make the Administration conform to the Cape system, and in 1897 he set about doing this as far as it involved education policy. It was soon clear, however, that such a policy was impossible, even if the money had been available, without being unfair to the Church bodies who had hitherto been encouraged to commit themselves in the field of education. Moreover, Rhodes himself seemed to have changed his mind about conformity to the Cape system, at least in so far as it concerned education. Finally, there was the new Legislative Council to consider, for it would itself want to have a say in what kind of policy should be adopted and might resent pre-emptive executive action. In the few months that remained before it was to meet, therefore, the best policy would have been to do nothing; but inaction was impossible, as the Civil Commissioner for Bulawayo made clear:

With the great influx of population which is already taking place and which continues increasing, the number of children in the town becomes more and more numerous, and provision for their sound education must be made. As prospective citizens of a state it is desirable that the Government should exercise a paternal interest in such education by contributing to educational establishments on the basis of annual grants-in-aid to such schools as attain a certain standard to be approved or to be certified by Government inspectors.⁸⁶

Although Church and private schools already established in the country by 1899 had all received Government aid in the shape of land grants, only the Dutch Reformed Church schools operating under the Jameson-Strasheim agreement, the American Methodist school in Umtali and the Public Schools in Fort Victoria and Salisbury were in regular receipt of aid towards building costs and teachers' salaries. It has been seen that the expense of running schools, as revealed by applications for help from the Catholics and Anglicans in 1898, was proving to be increasingly difficult to bear without similar grants being made to them as well. The new Legislative Council, however, was not due to meet until May 1899, and an ordinance could not be implemented

⁸³LO 3/1/73 (3-24.xii. 1898), Rhodesia, General, No. 172, 3.xii.1898.

⁸⁴LO 1/1/4, Inskipp to Gaul, 14.x.1898.

⁸⁵LO 3/1/72, Inskipp to Milton, 26.xi.1898.

⁸⁶*Reports on the Administration of Rhodesia, 1897-1898*, Extract from the report of the Civil Commissioner, Bulawayo, E. Ross-Townsend, for the year ended 31.iii.1898, p.269.

much before the end of the year. The period between January and May 1899, therefore, was an anxious one for the Church bodies concerned in education, not only because they were held in suspense as to what kind of policy would be decided on by the new Council, but also because they had to deal with the continued difficulty of running schools entirely out of their own resources.

It must also have been a difficult time for Milton who had to continue to try to adhere to the Executive Council and London Board decisions made in 1897 on the undenominational public school policy until the new Council authorised him to modify it in favour of voluntary schools. Yet, at the same time, he had to try not to offend Church bodies who had done so much for the development of the country. As for the Church bodies and the Roman Catholics in particular, while they were anxious to have their place in the education system of the country secured, they also wanted to avoid public controversy over the matter.⁸⁷ Consequently, when an editorial appeared in *The Bulawayo Chronicle* which strongly criticised the Government for not giving sufficient aid to the Convent School, Fr Sykes quickly replied with a letter in which he praised the Administration for its help so far in the field of education, and he also made the following statement which shows that the Church bodies were aware of the London Board decision of November 1897 to lay aside money for educational purposes:

I hear on good authority that the government had this year set aside a considerable sum of money to be devoted to educational requirements in Rhodesia, the destination of which is to be left to the discretion of the new Council when constituted.⁸⁸

Fr Sykes' action appears to have laid public controversy to rest although the Wesleyan Church Synod there did address the Administration 'asking [it] to establish an undenominational day school in the town'.⁸⁹

In December, 1898, the Administrator of Matabeleland, Captain the Hon. Arthur Lawley, with Milton's approval applied to the London Board on behalf of the Dominican Sisters in Bulawayo for a grant on the 'pound for pound' system up to £1,000 towards the erection of their new home.⁹⁰ In the following January, when he may have heard that the request made for the Sisters had been acceded to, Bishop Gaul again applied for aid to his Bulawayo school.⁹¹ All that came of this application, however, was the extension to eighteen months of a time-limit for the erection by the Church of buildings to the value of £1,000, which had been made conditional by the Company

⁸⁷St. George's College Archives, Salisbury, Box A4/1 [Correspondence of Fr Barthelemy, 1899-1900], on Bulawayo Public School Controversy], Fr FitzHenry to Barthelemy, 24 iv.1899.

⁸⁸See *The Bulawayo Chronicle (Weekly Edition)*, 15 and 22 iv.1898.

⁸⁹*Ibid.*, 28.i.1899. Although the Education Ordinance of 1899 was to make provision for the establishment of such schools, and one had already been established in Salisbury, the Wesleyans in fact had to wait, as has been seen earlier in this paper, over ten years before their request was to be granted in Bulawayo.

⁹⁰LO 1/1/6 [12-19.i.1899], Lawley to London Board, 2.xii.1898.

⁹¹EC 3/1/1, third meeting, 13.ii.1899, Minute No. 29.

for its grants of land made to the Anglicans in Bulawayo in the previous year.⁹² In this the Company was not acting unfairly towards the Anglicans, for unlike the Catholics, they had been in receipt of a yearly grant for general church purposes from the Company;⁹³ moreover, the grant made to the Dominicans by the Company was in recognition specifically of their services in the Bulawayo Hospital and was therefore not directly connected with the Company's educational policy.⁹⁴

The final, and probably the most decisive, moves in the genesis of the Education Ordinance of 1899 came in March 1899, when Fr Daignault, wrote a letter to the London Board which began as follows:

I received lately a letter from the Rev. M. Barthelemy, of Bulawayo, in which he says: 'I was speaking the other day to Cap. Lawley about the money set aside by the London Board of the Chartered Company for educational purposes, and, I asked him the reason why we should be told to wait for the meeting and decision of the future Rhodesian Council before getting any share of the grant, whilst a large portion of it had already been given away for the building of an undenominational school in Salisbury? Cap. Lawley answered that the grant has been made by the London Board for undenominational schools and that consequently Mr Milton did not feel justified in disposing of it for other schools.' I have since ascertained that the resolution passed by your Board does limit the grant in aid of education, in Rhodesia, to undenominational schools.

Allow me to say that this Resolution appears to me to be both unfair and injurious to the best interest of education in Rhodesia.⁹⁵

This letter goes on to criticise the policy of providing aid solely to public undenominational schools, using the arguments which Fr Sykes had used in the letter which Fr Daignault had forwarded to the London Board in the previous year. Early in April, these Roman Catholic fears of the Company neglecting their interests must have been partially assuaged when the £2,000 loan to the Convent made in 1898 was converted into a gift. Meanwhile, the Duke of Norfolk, in England, and Dr F. Rutherford Harris, B.S.A. Company secretary at the Cape Town Office and close associate of Rhodes, had entered into the lists on behalf of the voluntary school cause; they both approached Rhodes on the question and Harris assured Daignault: 'You can rely upon this matter being put straight for you if my worrying can do it'.⁹⁶

⁹²For conditions of this land grant, see EC 3/1/1, sixty-fourth meeting, 14.ix.1898, Minute No. 327; for extension of the time limit, see *ibid.*, eighth meeting, 27.iii.1899, Minute No. 72.

⁹³LO 3/1/66, Daignault to the London Board, 16.v.1898.

⁹⁴LO 1/1/6, Lawley to the London Board, 2.xii.1898.

⁹⁵LO 1/1/8, Daignault to the London Board, 10.iii.1899. One reason for quoting from this letter is that Atkinson's assumption that there was what he calls the 'Milton Resolution' of 1899 appears to be based solely upon a deduction from the above passage; Atkinson, *Teaching Rhodesians*, pp.40-1, cites Daignault's letter in St. George's College Archives, (Box A 5/2), but this is simply a copy of the original in the London Office file.

⁹⁶St. George's College Archives, Box A 5/2 (Fr Daignault, Correspondence and Papers on the Undenominational Schools Question, 1898-9), Rutherford Harris to Daignault, 23.iii. 1899, cited in Atkinson, *Teaching Rhodesians*, p.41.

Daignault and Fr F. C. Kolbe then had an interview with Rhodes, in which it appears, they played on Rhodes's longstanding desire to see religion play a part in education, as indeed it had so far in Rhodesia. The result, according to Kolbe's description, was immediate:

I don't know if Father Daignault wrote to you about an interview we had with Mr Rhodes about education in Rhodesia. Rhodes then declared himself against merely secular education, — called it a 'fad'. He then and there wrote out a telegram which he despatched to Mr Milton.⁹⁷

A message from Rhodes, which apparently resulted from this interview put these fears to rest:

My idea about education is as follows:- that you should only start a Government school where you think that the voluntary schools are not sufficiently affected. I would, however, in addition give a capitation grant to the Church schools on the receipt of a certificate from a Government Inspector that the pupils have passed a certain standard. As to your government school — and I believe you have one in Salisbury — I must say I hold the old views that there should be religious instruction in the following manner, namely: that from say half-past eight to nine every morning a separate classroom should be allotted to the clergy of the different denominations who desire to instruct children, with the consent of parents, in their religion and during that time to those children whose parents do not wish them to receive instruction some other subject should be taught, otherwise, as Metcalfe says, they will get into the habit of saying 'thank goodness my old dad is an atheist and I get an extra half an hour in the playground' — I don't mean that when a government school is started in a town where there is already a voluntary school that the capitation grant to the latter school should cease. My opinion is that it should continue. It would bear well, if you think it advisable, to call together representatives of the people and the clergymen of the different denominations and discuss this question with them before submitting a Bill before the Council as it is a very important subject and what is decided upon now will practically be the educational system of the country in the future.⁹⁸

It is not known if Milton called the public meeting as Rhodes suggested, but the Ordinance was drafted along these lines, and was passed by the Legislative Council without amendment in June, and promulgated in December, as Ordinance 18 of 1899.⁹⁹

This provided for the first time for the establishment of a government education department and inspectorate (sections 2, 3). Undenominational public schools under approved management boards and voluntary church schools where an average daily attendance of twenty-five pupils could be secured were made eligible for government aid towards the salaries of teachers and school requisites (Order "A", sections 2, 14), and towards building loans and land grants (Order "C", sections 1-3). The subjects for instruction in all schools were to include 'Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, English Grammar and descriptive Geography in the primary or elementary course, and physical

⁹⁷St. George's College Archives, Box 4/1, Kolbe to Daignault, 16.v.1899.

⁹⁸LO 1/1/9, Jones to Milton, 15.iv.1899. Sir Charles Metcalfe, engineer and close friend of Rhodes.

⁹⁹*Debates, 1899 to 1903*, p.33, 16.vi.1899; Govt Notice 307, 15.xii.1899.

drill' (Order "A", section 10). Exclusively girls' schools were to make provision 'for superior instruction in the English language and composition, outlines of history and geography, arithmetic, plain needlework and domestic economy' (Order "A", section 12). Additional grants were made where pupils 'reached a certain standard of proficiency . . . in any four of the following additional subjects, namely, English Literature, History, Elementary Mathematics, Elementary Science, Shorthand, book-keeping, [and] vocal or Instrumental Music' (Order "A", section 16). Evening classes, which were operative in connection with St. George's and the Salisbury public school by 1900,¹⁰⁰ could now be granted special subsidies (Order "A", section 15). As for Rhodes's plan for religious instruction, instead of allowing free access by the clergy to apply only to undenominational schools, Milton extended it to all European schools in receipt of government aid (Order "A", section 9); and this considerably reduced sectarian tensions at least for the time being. By a short paragraph entitled 'Native Schools' a grant-in-aid of ten shillings per pupil up to a maximum of £150 a year could be made to any mission school where the average attendance was of at least fifty pupils and where at least two hours of 'industrial training' was given daily (Order "B").

By 1900 a total of 14 schools for Europeans in the country catered for 475 pupils, 1 Coloured school catered for 25 pupils, and 20 Mission schools catered for over 1,300 pupils.¹⁰¹ Grants made in the year 1900-1901 were £2,094.15s.5d. to eight of the European schools, and £232 to three of the mission schools; although no provision at all had been made in the Ordinance for Coloured schools, the St. Cyril's school in Bulawayo was nevertheless granted £75 in the same year.¹⁰² For many years large numbers of children of all races were to go without any formal education at all, and in the case of Europeans, for whom most of the expenditure was made, it was calculated in 1916 that over twenty per cent of the 4,289 children between seven and fifteen years of age never saw the inside of a classroom.¹⁰³ In defence of the contrast between European and African provisions in the ordinance, the Inspector of Schools in 1901 argued, with justification, that as a result of philanthropic endowment and missionary activity African education was 'much more looked after than the education of whites'. If the government was going to encourage European immigration 'terms so favourable to white schools' were necessary. 'You must not imagine', he went on to inform the Revd F. W. Bates of Mount Selinda Mission, 'that the government are against educating the natives. But they must act as they see best in the interests of the country with the means they have at their disposal. This is why they so strongly insist on industrial work. The first consideration however is the

¹⁰⁰Southern Rhodesia, *Report of the Inspector of Schools upon Education*, Sessional Papers, 1900, p.2.

¹⁰¹*Reports on the Administration of Rhodesia, 1898-1900*, p.341.

¹⁰²Southern Rhodesia, *Report of the Inspector of Schools upon Education* (For the Year Ended 31st March 1901), Sessional Papers, 1901, p.3.

¹⁰³Southern Rhodesia, *Report of the Education Committee, 1916*, Sessional Papers, 1917, A. 2, p.4.

fostering of schools for whites which has proved to be by no means an easy problem.¹⁰⁴ In ensuing years the fact that many Africans received superior education to Europeans was a constant theme of settler debates on education,¹⁰⁵ and this perhaps reveals the most unfortunate consequence of the racially separated system of education established in 1899, namely, that it engendered a spirit of competition rather than co-operation in a matter of greatest national importance.

The conclusion of this examination of education during the pioneer period is that most reliance was necessarily laid upon voluntary effort. Therefore when the state was in a position to assume complete responsibility for the provision of European education, the place of voluntary schools, which it had encouraged in the system, was never eliminated. Largely the product of local development in the preceding years, and not simply the outcome of actions largely confined to early 1899 as Atkinson has it,¹⁰⁶ the Ordinance crystallised a system which in important aspects remained unchanged down to the present day; and by laying down a somewhat inflexible pattern along racial lines, it was to create problems for the future. Settlers became used to the idea of separate schools for the different races, and years later initiative in the creation of multiracial schools was taken only in the voluntary sector. In this respect, it was perhaps unfortunate that voluntary schools were largely superseded by state controlled schools. Although it was not intended at the time, the door was to be opened for this transformation of the European system by the Education Ordinance of 1903, which will be the subject of a forthcoming article.

¹⁰⁴E 1/1/2, G. Duthie to Bates, 16.ix. and 20.xi. 1901.

¹⁰⁵For particularly significant examples of such anxiety on the part of settlers see especially, *The Rhodesia Herald*, 2.viii. and 3.ix.1906; *Debates*, 1910, p.49, *Debates*, 1920, c.486; Rhodesia Agricultural Union, *Report of Proceedings at the 12th Annual Congress held at Salisbury, 21-23.iv.1915*, p.124.

¹⁰⁶Atkinson, *Teaching Rhodesians*, pp.39-43.



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